



## Gang Resistance and Intervention Teamwork (GRIT) Community Resource Provider News August 2011

### WPD Provides Re-entry Training

The City of Wilmington's Hemenway Center turned into a community classroom in July for individuals with less than favorable pasts. The Wilmington Police Department along with the Police Recreation Association, North State Law Enforcement Officers Association and Boots on the Ground helped to sponsor a four day training workshop for former gang members and individuals wanting to turn their lives around. Representatives from area resource providers were also on hand to gain and contribute valuable information.

Captain Michael White – with the Brunswick County School Systems' "Bootstrap Program" served as the workshop instructor. White, a former inmate who served more than seven years for drug charges told the participants not to let their pasts tell their story. "Each day I ask myself how can I become a better me?" says White who serves as a preacher and motivational speaker throughout the country.

White told participants that he applied for 23 jobs after he left prison – it was the 24<sup>th</sup> try that landed him a job. He also encouraged participants to change their surroundings and fall madly in love with freedom. Participants also learned how to identify and pursue employment opportunities, interview tips, handling money and much more.

The four day workshop was free and open to anyone with a criminal history. Participants received a certificate of completion from the Wilmington Police Department and were given the opportunity to sign-up for a four week Rising to Success program sponsored by Cape Fear Community College.



Participant Ivey Batts introduces himself to the class



Participant shares her point-of-view on becoming a better me



Captain White congratulates participants on graduation day!



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### Boots on the Ground Kicks off Midnight Basketball

Pastors and ministry leaders from seven Wilmington churches donned their shorts and blue jeans and hit the basketball court at the Martin Luther King Center on Friday, August 5<sup>th</sup> with more than 30 youths throughout the community. This effort helped to re-launch the City's Midnight Basketball program.

The Midnight Basketball program is being offered by Boots on the Ground and the City of Wilmington's Parks & Recreation Division in response to a community-wide survey. Residents in eight housing communities were surveyed earlier this year by Boots on the Ground. More than 300 respondents participated in the survey and listed youth activities as the number one need in the community.

The effort is also being endorsed by the Wilmington Police Department's Re-entry Program. Re-entry participants Antwane Walker and James Banks spoke to youths about the importance of staying out trouble and resisting gangs. Walker and Banks told youths about their time behind bars and the importance of family and freedom.

The Midnight Basketball program is opened to youths 12 to 18 years of age and will run on August 12<sup>th</sup> & 19<sup>th</sup> - from 8:00 pm – 12 midnight each date. Additional dates will be announced. If you are interested in volunteering or have questions please contact the Community Resource Office at 910-341-4608.

**Next Gang Intervention Call-in:**  
**Tuesday, August 30, 2011- 6:00 pm**  
**Maides Park Recreation Center**  
Call to reserve seating space is limited

If you would like your program information included in this news bulletin please email your information to [linda.rawley@wilmingtonnc.gov](mailto:linda.rawley@wilmingtonnc.gov)

